

# The Czar's Spy

The Mystery of a Silent Love

By Chevalier WILLIAM LE QUEUX Author of "The Closed Book," etc.

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## SYNOPSIS.

The yacht *Lola* narrowly escapes wreck in Leghorn harbor. Gordon Gregg, lieutenant for the British consul, is called upon by Hornby, the *Lola's* owner, and dines aboard with him and his friend, Hyton Chatter. Aboard the yacht he accidentally sees a room full of arms and ammunition and a torn photograph of a young girl. That night the consul's safe is robbed and the *Lola* puts suddenly to sea. The police find that Hornby is a fraud and the *Lola's* name a false one. Gregg visits Capt. Jack Durnford of the marines aboard his vessel, and is surprised to learn that Durnford knows, but will not reveal, the mystery of the *Lola*. "It concerns a woman."

## CHAPTER III—Continued.

He thanked me profusely when I consented to go with him. "Ah, signor padrone!" he said gratefully, "she will be so delighted. It is so very good of you."

We hailed a hansom and drove across Westminster bridge to the address he gave—a gloomy back street off the York road, one of those narrow, grimy thoroughfares into which the sun never shines.

A low-looking, evil-faced fellow opened the door to us and growled acquaintance with Ollinto, who, striking a match, ascended the worn, carpetless stairs before me, apologizing for passing before me, and saying in Italian: "We live at the top, signore, because it is cheaper and the air is better."

"Quite right," I said. "Quite right. Go on." And I thought I heard my cab driving away.

It was a gloomy, forbidding, unlighted place into which I would certainly have hesitated to enter had not my companion beep my trusted servant, but contrary to my expectations, the sitting-room we entered on the top floor was quite comfortably furnished, clean and respectable, even though traces of poverty were apparent. A cheap lamp was burning upon the table, but the apartment was unoccupied.

Ollinto, in surprise, passed into the adjoining room, returning a moment later, exclaiming: "Armida must have gone out to get something. Or perhaps she is with the people, a compositor and his wife, who live on the floor below. They are very good to her. I'll go and find her. Accommodate yourself with a chair, signore." And he drew the best chair forward for me, and dusted it with his handkerchief.

I allowed him to go and fetch her, rather surprised that she should be well enough to get about after all he had told me concerning her illness. Yet consumption does not keep people in bed until its final stages.

Ollinto returned in a few moments, saying that his wife had evidently gone to do some shopping in the Lower-Market.

"I hope you are not pressed for time, signore?" he said apologetically. "But, of course, the poor girl does not know the surprise awaiting her. She will surely not be long."

"Then I'll wait," I said, and flung myself back into the chair he had brought forward for me.

"I have nothing to offer you, signor padrone," he said, with a laugh. "I did not expect a visitor, you know."

"No, no, Ollinto. I've only just had dinner. But tell me how you have fared since you left me."

"Ah!" he laughed bitterly. "I had many ups and downs before I found myself here in London. The sea did not suit me—neither did the work. I managed to work my way from Genoa to London. My first place was scullion in a restaurant in Tottenham Court road. Afterwards I went to the Milano, and I hope to get into one of the big hotels very soon—or perhaps the grill-room at the Carlton."

"I'll see what I can do for you," I said. "I know several hotel managers who might have a vacancy."

"Ah, signore!" he cried, filled with gratification. "If you only would! A word from you would secure me a good position. I can work, that you know—and I do work. I will work—for her sake."

"Yes," he said in a hoarse voice, his manner suddenly changing. "You have tonight shown me, signore, that you are my friend, and I will, in return, show you that I am yours." And suddenly grasping both my hands, he pulled me from the chair in which I was sitting, at the same time asking in a low intense whisper: "Do you always carry a revolver here in England, as you do in Italy?"

"Yes," I answered in surprise at his action and his question. "Why?"

"Because there is danger here," he answered in the same low earnest tone. "Get your weapon ready. You may want it."

"I don't understand," I said, feeling my hand in my back pocket to make sure it was there.

"Forget what I have said—all that I have told you tonight, sir," he said. "I have not explained the whole truth. You are in peril—in deadly peril!"

"How?" I exclaimed breathlessly, surprised at his extraordinary change of manner and his evident apprehension lest something should befall me.

"Wait, and you shall see," he whispered. "But first tell me, signore, that you will forgive me for the part I have played in this dastardly affair. I, like yourself, fell innocently into the hands of your enemies."

"My enemies! Who are they?" "They are unknown, and for the present must remain so. But if you doubt your peril, watch—" and taking the rusty fire-tongs from the grate he carefully placed them on end in front of the deep old armchair in which I had sat, and then allowed them to fall against the edge of the seat, springing quickly back as he did so.

In an instant a bright blue flash shot through the place, and the iron fell aside, fused and twisted out of all recognition.

I stood aghast, utterly unable for the moment to sufficiently realize how narrowly I had escaped death.

"Look! See here, behind!" cried the Italian, directing my attention to the back legs of the chair, where, on bending with the lamp, I saw, to my surprise, that two wires were connected, and ran along the floor and out of the window, while concealed beneath the ragged carpet, in front of the chair, was a thin plate of steel, whereon my foot had rested.

Those who had so ingeniously enticed me to that gloomy house of death had connected up the overhead electric light main with that innocent looking chair, and from some unseen point had been able to switch on a current of sufficient voltage to kill fifty men.

I stood stock-still, not daring to move lest I might come into contact with some hidden wire, the slightest touch of which must bring instant death upon me.

"Your enemies prepared this terrible trap for you," declared the man who was once my trusted servant. "When I entered into the affair I was not aware that it was to be fatal. They gave me no inkling of their dastardly intention. But there is no time to admit of explanations now, signore. He added breathlessly, in a low desperate voice: "Say that you will not prejudice me," he pleaded earnestly.

"I will not prejudice you until I've heard your explanation," I said. "I certainly owe my life to you tonight."

"Then quick! Fly from this house this instant. If you are stopped, then use your revolver. Don't hesitate. In a moment they will be here upon you."

"But who are they, Ollinto? You must tell me," I cried in desperation.

"Die! Go! Go!" he cried, pushing me violently towards the door. "Run, or we shall both die—both of us! Fly downstairs. I must make feat of dashing after you."

I turned, and seeing his desperate eagerness, precipitately fled, while he ran down behind me, uttering fierce imprecations in Italian, as though I had escaped him.

A man in the narrow dark passage attempted to trip me up as I ran, but I fired point blank at him, and gaining the door unlocked it, and an instant later found myself out in the street.

It was the narrowest escape from death that I had ever had in all my life—surely the strangest and most remarkable adventure. What, I wondered, did it mean?

Next morning I searched up and down Oxford street for the Restaurant Milano, but could not find it. I asked shopkeepers, postmen and policemen; I examined the London directory at the bar of the Oxford Music hall, and made every inquiry possible. But all was to no purpose. No one knew of such a place. There were restaurants in plenty in Oxford street, from the Frascati down to the humble coffee-shop, but nobody had ever heard of the "Milano."

I drove over to Lambeth and wandered through the maze of mean streets off the York road, yet for the life of me I could not decide into which house I had been taken. There were a dozen which seemed to me that they might be the identical house from which I had so narrowly escaped with my life.

Gradually it became impressed upon me that my ex-servant had somehow gained knowledge that I was in London, and that he had watched my exit from the club, and that all his pitiful story regarding Armida was false. He was the enemy of my unknown enemies, who had so ingeniously and so relentlessly plotted my destruction. My unknown enemies had secured the services of Ollinto in their dastardly plot to kill me. With what motive?

That day I did my business in the city with a distrust of everyone, not knowing whether I was not followed or whether those who sought my life were not plotting some other equally innocently to my death. I endeavored to discover Ollinto by every possible means during those stifling days that followed. The heat of London was to me, more oppressive than the fiery sunshine of the old-world Tuscany, and everyone who could be out of town had left for the country or the sea.

Defeated in every inquiry, and my business at last concluded in London, I went up to Dumfries on a duty visit which I paid annually to my uncle, Sir George Little. Each time I returned from abroad I was always a welcome guest at Greenlaw, and this occasion proved no exception, for the country houses of Dumfries are always gay in August in prospect of the shooting.

"Some new people have taken Ran-noch castle. Rather nice they seem," remarked my aunt as we were sitting together at luncheon the day after my arrival. "Their name is Leithcourt, and they've asked me to drive you over there to tennis this afternoon."

"I'm not much of a player, you know, aunt. In Italy we don't believe in athletics. But if it's out of politeness, of course, I'll go."

"Very well," she said. "Then I'll order the victoria for three."

"There are several nice girls there, Gordon," remarked my uncle mischievously. "You have a good time, so don't think you are going to be bored."

"No fear of that," was my answer. And at three o'clock Sir George, his wife, and myself set out for that fine old historic castle that stands high on the Bogle. When we drove into the grounds we found a gay party in summer toilettes assembled on the ancient bowling green, now transformed into a modern tennis lawn.

Mrs. Leithcourt and her husband, a tall, thin, gray-headed man, both came forward to greet us. They were a merry crowd. The Leithcourts were entertaining a large house party, and their hospitality was on a scale quite in keeping with the fine old place they rented.

Tea was served on the lawn by the footmen, and, tired of the game, I found myself with Muriel Leithcourt, a bright, dark-eyed girl with tightly-bound hair, and wearing a cotton blouse and flannel tennis skirt.

"I know Italy slightly," she said. "I was in Florence and Naples with mother last season."

And then we began to discuss pictures and sculptures and the sights of Italy generally. I discerned from her remarks that she had traveled widely; indeed, she told me that both her father and mother were never happier

than when moving from place to place in search of variety and distraction. We had entered the huge paneled hall of the castle, and had passed up the quaint old stone staircase to the long banquetting hall with its paneled oak ceiling. It was pleasant lounging there in the cool old room after the hot sunshine outside, and as I gazed around the place I noted how much more luxurious and tasteful it now was to what it had been in the days when I had visited its owner several years before.

"We are awfully glad to be up here," my pretty companion was saying. "We had such a busy season in London." And then she went on to describe the court ball, and two or three of the most notable functions about which I had read in my English paper beside the Mediterranean.

She attracted me on account of her bright vivacity, quick wit and keen sense of humor, her gossip interested me, and as the golden sunset flooded the handsome old room I sat listening to her, inwardly admiring her innate grace and handsome countenance.

I had no idea who or what her father was—whether a wealthy manufacturer, like so many who take expensive shoots and give big entertainments in order to edge their way into society by its back door, or whether he was a gentleman of means and of good family. I rather guessed the latter, from his gentlemanly bearing and polished manner. His appearance, tall and erect, was that of a retired officer, and his clean-cut face was one of marked distinction.

I was telling my pretty companion something of my own life, how, because I loved Italy so well, I lived in Tuscany in preference to living in England, and how each year I came home for a month or two to visit my relations and to keep in touch with things.

Suddenly she said: "I was once in Leghorn for a few hours. We were yachting in the Mediterranean. I love the sea—and yachting is such awfully good fun, if you only get decent weather."

The mention of yachting brought back to my mind the visit of the *Lola* and its mysterious sequel.

"Your father has a yacht, then?" I remarked, with as little concern as I could.

"Yes. The *Iris*. My uncle is cruising on her up the Norwegian Fjords. For us it is a change to be here, because we are so often afloat."

"So you must have made many long voyages, and seen many odd corners of the world, Miss Leithcourt?" I remarked, my interest in her increasing, for she seemed so extremely intelligent and well informed.

"Oh, yes. We've been to Mexico, and to Panama, besides Morocco, Egypt and the west coast of Africa."

"And you've actually landed at Leghorn!" I remarked.

"Yes, but we didn't stay there more than an hour—to send a telegram. I think it was. Father said there was nothing to see there. He and I went ashore, and I must say I was rather disappointed."

"You are quite right. The town itself is ugly and uninteresting. But the outskirts—San Jacopo, Ardenza and Antignano are all delightful. It was unfortunate that you did not see them. Was it long ago when you put in there?"

"Not very long. I really don't recollect the exact date," was her reply. "We were on our way home from Alexandria."

"Have you ever, in any of the ports you've been, seen a yacht called the *Lola*?" I asked eagerly, for it occurred to me that perhaps she might be able to give me information.

"The *Lola*!" she gasped, and instantly her face changed. A flush overspread her cheeks, succeeded next moment by a deathlike pallor. "The *Lola*!" she repeated in a strange, hoarse voice, at the same time endeavoring strenuously not to exhibit any apprehension. "No. I have never heard of any such vessel. Is she a steam yacht? Who's her owner?"

I regarded her in amazement and suspicion, for I saw that mention of the name had aroused within her some serious misgiving. That look in her dark eyes as they fixed themselves upon me was one of distinct and unspeakable terror.

What could she possibly know concerning the mysterious craft?

"I don't know the owner's name," I said, still affecting not to have noticed her alarm and apprehension. "The vessel ran aground at the Méloria, a dangerous shoal outside Leghorn, and through the stupidity of her captain was very nearly lost."

"Yes!" she gasped, in a half-whisper, bending to me eagerly, unable to sufficiently conceal the terrible anxiety consuming her. "And you—did you go aboard her?"

"Yes," was the only word I uttered. A silence fell between us, and as my eyes fixed themselves upon her, I saw that from her handsome mobile countenance all the light and life had suddenly gone out, and I knew that she was in secret possession of the key to that remarkable enigma that so puzzled me.

possible directly through food and water.

The amount of iron needed appears to be varied with different individuals, depending on the nature of their work, diet and other conditions. Careful experiments have shown that the average man under normal conditions requires about fifteen milligrams of iron per day. The average woman is supposed to require about eight-tenths as much food as a man and the same proportion of iron will suffice. A child that needs half as much food requires the same proportion of iron.

As long as infants are drinking milk they get only a small amount of iron, but it is interesting to know that a certain amount has been stored in their systems at birth to tide them over until they get a diet which contains its share of iron.

Beefsteak and some vegetables are rich in iron. In meat the iron exists largely as hemoglobin, due to the blood contained in the muscular tissues. Iron in combination with protein matter is found in considerable quantity in grains. String beans, navy dried beans, lima beans, spinach especial-

ly, cabbage and dried peas are rich in iron. Among the fruits that have plenty of iron are dried prunes, apples and raisins.

**A New Method.** Pastor Simon Stephanoff of Moscow, a merchant of large means, who has abandoned business life to devote himself to evangelism, has adopted the following as one method of reaching people usually inaccessible. He has given into a phonograph an address presenting in simple terms the essentials of salvation, and has put the resulting disks on sale. These are readily sold and are used in hotels, private houses and cafes.

**Public Morality.** I have not the slightest regard for that statesmanship which is divorced from the morality which we say ought to guide us in our private life, which we gather for a nation as for individuals from the religion we profess. Time, persistent labor, fidelity to the great principles which we hold and believe in, will give us the victory over existing evils.—John Bright.

Of a sudden the door opened, and a voice cried gaily:

"Why, I've been looking everywhere for you, Muriel. Why are you hidden here? Aren't you coming?"

We both turned, and as she did so a low cry of blank dismay involuntarily escaped her.

Next instant I sprang to my feet. The reason of her cry was apparent, for there, in the full light of the golden



I Regarded Her in Astonishment and Suspicion.

sunset streaming through the long open windows, stood a broad-shouldered, fair-haired man in tennis flannels and a Panama hat—the fugitive I knew as Philip Hornby!

I faced him, speechless.

## CHAPTER IV.

### In Which the Mystery Increases.

Neither of us spoke. Hornby started quickly as soon as his eyes fell upon me, and his face became blanched to the lips, while Muriel Leithcourt, quick to notice the sudden change in him, rose and introduced us in as calm a voice as she could command.

"I don't think you are acquainted," she said to me with a smile. "This is Mr. Martin Woodroffe—Mr. Gordon Gregg."

We bowed, exchanging greetings as strangers, while, carefully watching, I saw how greatly the minds of both were relieved. They shot meaning glances at each other, and then, as he chatted with the daughter of the house, he cast a quick, covert glance at me, and then darted a meaning look at her—a look of renewed confidence, as though he felt that he had successfully averted any suspicions I might have held.

We talked of the prospects of the grouse and the salmon, and from his remarks he seemed to be as keen at sport as he had once made out himself to be at yachting. While I was carefully watching the rapid working of his mind, Leithcourt himself entered and joined us.

Host and guest were evidently on the most intimate terms. Leithcourt addressed him as "Martin," and while they were talking Muriel suggested that we should stroll down to the tennis courts again, an invitation which, much as I regretted leaving the two men, I was bound to accept. Among the party strolling and lounging there prior to departure were quite a number of people I knew, people who had been my uncle's friends. In Scotland there is always a hearty hospitality among the sporting folk, and the laws of caste are far less rigorous than they are in England.

I was standing chatting with two ladies who were about to take leave of their hostess, when Leithcourt returned, but alone. Hornby had not accompanied him. Was it because he feared to again meet me?

In order to ascertain something regarding the man who had so mysteriously fled from Leghorn, I managed by the exercise of a little diplomacy to sit on the lawn with a young married woman named Tennant, wife of a cavalry captain, who was one of the house party. After a little time I succeeded in turning the conversation to her fellow guests, and more particularly to the man I knew as Hornby.

"Oh! Mr. Woodroffe is most amusing," declared the bright little woman. "He's always playing some practical joke or other. After dinner he is usually the life and soul of our party."

"Yes," I said, "I like what little I have seen of him. He's a very good fellow, I should say. I've heard that he's engaged to Muriel." I hazarded, "Is that true?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THEN HE WANTED HIM BADLY

Sandy realized the need of insurance when the "Fire Fiend" got Down to Work.

The following story, the chief actor in which is still alive, would seem to justify the term "canny" sometimes applied to the Scot.

An old retired Fife shire farmer was from time to time called on and advised to insure his house against fire by an agent who was familiarly known as "Sandy."

The old man, however, met the agent's advances with "Na, na!" following by what he doubtless considered a clinching argument: "My house is no likely to gang on fire, mon!"

The unexpected, however, happened, and the neighbors were astonished to see the old man, instead of trying to put out the fire, running up and down the village street, shouting:

"Waur's that man Sandy noo! Whaur's that insurance chap? It's terrible ye can never see a body when ye're needin' 'im!"

## Beautiful Midsummer Toilette



The unusual and distinguished style of this costume has been achieved by the employment of familiar materials. White voile, very fine in quality, flit lace, with an open mesh, soutache braid, and pearl buttons are all staple goods well known and well loved.

The pretty fashion of posing one transparent fabric over another shows to excellent advantage in the skirt. The underskirt of voile is full and round. Above the two-inch hem there are seven narrow tucks an inch and a half apart. Just above the knees a band of braiding, in an ornamental scroll pattern, is applied all around the underskirt, finishing its decoration.

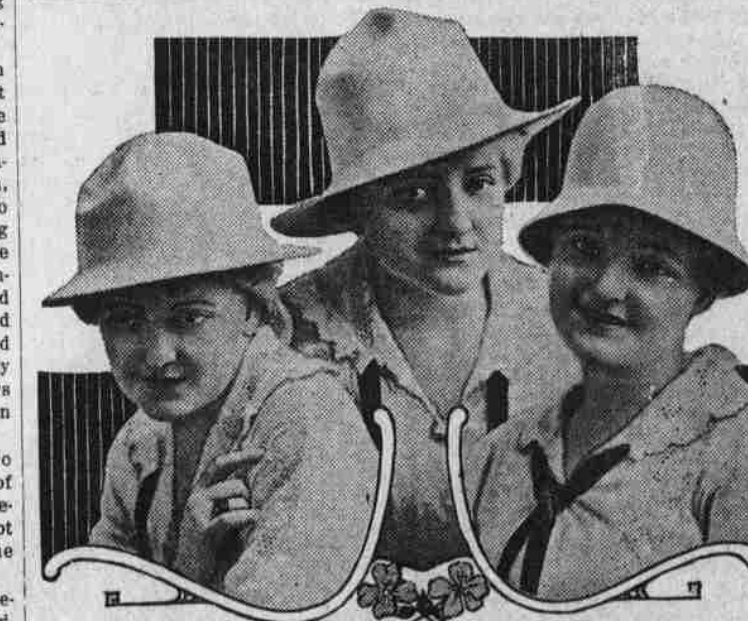
The overdress of flit lace does not extend to the bottom of the underskirt, but is shorter by about nine inches. It is gathered in at the waist line with the voile, leaving a panel of the underskirt uncovered at the front, for the lace does not extend across the entire front of the gown. It is caught up and fastened to the underskirt just below the knees at each side, forming a slight drape.

In the bodice, which suggests the "moyen age" inspiration, the draping of the materials is reversed, and voile appears over flit net. It hangs straight and boxlike from the shoulders to at least six inches below the normal waist line. Small tucks play a very important part in its construction, appearing over the shoulders and part way across the front. They supply the required scant fullness in the material that is caught in by the garniture of braiding at the bottom. The braiding is in silk soutache like that in the skirt, with the pattern widened at the front. The long plain sleeves are finished with small tucks in a group of seven on the forearm and a second group of five on the upper arm. A narrow pattern in the braiding outlines the arm's-eye.

There is a tall standing turnover collar of voile and a tie of narrow black velvet is brought twice around the throat. It supports the collar close under the chin and terminates in two long ends at the front.

The flower-trimmed leghorn hat with sash ends of wide black velvet ribbon, and the low shoes of black and white kid, are details not to be lost sight of in completing a toilette of exceptional beauty.

## Panama Hat of Enduring Beauty



For many generations the Panama hat was woven in one shape, and it took much urging and good management on the part of those who bought and imported the genuine South American Panama hat to persuade the native makers to produce other shapes. But finally this was accomplished and now one may buy a Panama in almost any shape. Not all the hats known by this name are South American products, (there are Panamas and Panamas), but whether made in Japan or Connecticut, or brought from its native home, the Panama is a beautiful product.

It is and is likely to continue to be the ideal hat for midsummer outing wear, for sports and for traveling. It is soft enough to be comfortable, and uncrushable and firm enough to need no support. It is made with the intention of fitting the head, as to the crown, and for shading the eyes, as to the brim. But in the past few seasons it has been possible to get Panamas with very wide brims, and these have added one more to the number of wide-brimmed straw hats used for the picturesque flower-laden millinery of midsummer.

But the hat that is dearest to the heart of lovers of the Panama is that which keeps as close as possible to the original, mannish shape or a variation that does not seem to change its character. Three popular shapes selected from this season's showing of Panamas are illustrated here. They are to be recommended as practical and becoming and correct in type.

These hats are usually very simply trimmed with bands of silk, ribbon or linen. Flat rosettes or hanging scarf ends are favorite decorations, and not to be improved upon. The wide-brimmed shapes are sometimes swathed with malines and finished with huge bows of this fabric. Occasionally flowers or feathers adorn them. But narrow-brimmed Panamas are trimmed in the simplest manner possible.

The fine South American Panama, if well cared for, will stand many seasons' wear. These hats can be cleaned and reblocked if one wishes to change the shape. But it is better to swathe the hat in a wide silk or chiffon scarf than to reblock it, and to wear it in its original shape. A hat so fine, so shapely and sensible will always look well.

It seems a pity to wear but a hat whose making involves such painstaking and wonderful work, by using a hat pin. In a fine hat it is better to sew hat fasteners in the band and secure it to the head in this way.

**Bound With Leather.** A frock of georgette crepe is made with three ruffles on the skirt, each bound with a narrow edge of black leather. The same black leather is used for a belt and to bind on the bodice.

**Blouse of Organdie.** Blouses of organdie unless made of a very fine quality are found to be unsatisfactory so that this charming material is used now more for trimming purposes such as collars and cuffs of

the spring blouses, not to speak of the dainty vestees. It is often cross-barred, that is, with a back-hand stitch in black or colors, or embroidered with flowers and the buttonholes done in the same color. Pieces of organdie trim other materials such as crepe de chine, batiste and other blouse materials.

"Look at that dog chasing his tail." "He is only doing what you and I are trying to do—making both ends meet."

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

Housewife Must Always Remember That Proper Percentage of Iron Is a Necessity.

Iron should play an important part in preparing meals. It is essential in the making of the red corpuscles in the blood and in directly concerned with the processes of oxidation and reproduction. The iron of the food enters the circulation and is deposited mainly in the liver, the spleen and the bone marrow. Iron may be taken as a medicine and stimulates the production of hemoglobin and red blood corpuscles, but it is better to get it if

etiquette not to begin a letter with the pronoun "I."

This is always a point which should be remembered in letter writing. It is always a wise plan to answer letters within a few days. In this way there is no danger of your laying them aside and forgetting them. This is especially important where invitations are concerned.—Camden Daily Courier.

## FOOD THAT IS NOURISHING

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Don't get into the habit of saying that you hate to write letters. Many a friendship has been broken by neglecting to answer letters.

Letter writing is decidedly not a forte with some women—they think it a bore, and keep their correspondence as far as possible within the very narrow limits. Others don't trouble even to answer letters when they get them.

"Oh! you know I'm a wretched correspondent," they will say in excuse. The woman who can talk on paper to the person to whom she is writing, almost in the same way and with the same fluency as she would talk to her were they together in the same room, is by far the most successful letter writer.

A good correspondent nearly always writes as she speaks.

It is one of the unwritten laws of

## HABIT OF LETTER WRITING

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